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AUTHOR Spahn, Lee P.
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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with whether developmental group counseling will improve peer relations in the elementary school classroom. It was hypothesized that developmental group counseling would improve peer relations. Group counseling in the schools seems particularly appropriate because of the nature of both the setting and the students. The elementary school student is at a stage in his life in which it is inevitable that he will decrease his total dependence on adult models and seek identification with his peers. Group counseling can provide opportunities for peer interaction in the presence of an understanding adult and without being dependent upon powers of censure and approval. Developmental group counseling provides the opportunity for each child to engage in an interpersonal process, through which he works in the peer group, to explain his feelings, attitudes, values, and problems, with the result that he is better able to deal with developmental tasks. Results showed that third grade boys and girls showed the greatest improvement in sociometric status; and girls at all grade levels profited more than the boys. (Author/TA)

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DEVELOPMENTAL GROUP COUNSELING

IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY
Lee P. Spahn

A Reseach Paper Submitted to the Department of Education in the Graduate Division of Barry College in Partical fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of Specialist of Education

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This research paper for the degree of Specialist of Education was directed by

Sister Marie Siena, O.P.

and approved by _____

as reader.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The child's entrance into elementary school removes him from the family circle which has to this point sustained his immediate needs and desires. From this protective and limited setting he is forced into a situation in which one "mother" must meet the needs of thirty children. How does the child learn to share his teacher, as well as himself, with his classmates? The world he faces for six hours a day is one in which he no longer holds the central position at all times. How can the counselor help the child learn to adjust to his new life situations and the demands placed upon him by membership in a group?

In the past decade many developments have occurred in the field of counseling. Perhaps the most significant of these is the acceptance of the fact that counseling in the elementary school is basically developmental and, unlike remedial services that are limited to a few children, should be made available for all. This assertion has caused schools to re-examine their counseling services and to develop new programs that are more group oriented and developmental in approach.

The growth of elementary counseling as a specialized function has created increased emphasis on the need to concentrate upon the developmental needs of the many, rather than the remedial needs of the few. While writers appear to be in

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agreement concerning the goal of assisting all children to deal with the developmental tasks and the learning needed for further growth, this agreement has not brought consensus concerning the methods most appropriate for reaching this goal.

Group counseling in the schools is particularly appropriate because of the nature of both the setting and the students. Children are essentially social beings--they grow and develop in groups. The group counseling relationship is more realistic to them than the one-to-one relationship with adults. Children tend to feel more comfortable, as a rule, in groups of peers rather than in face-to-face relationships with adults.

It is common knowledge that the earliest years are the formative ones in a child's development. It is at this time that impressions are made, directions responded to, fears developed, misconceptions magnified, and work habits established. The elementary school child is at a stage in his life in which it is inevitable that he will pull away from total dependence on adult models and seek identification with his peers. Group counseling provides opportunities for peer interaction in the presence of an understanding adult, while not dependent upon powers of censure and approval.

Counseling groups afford the child opportunities for socializing experiences in a somewhat controlled environment. Instead of his having to rely on a trial-and-error procedure to gain the understanding of the group, the child is afforded experience with feedback that allows him to look at his own

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relationships with others from a different perspective and is helped to find effective approaches to handling his problems. Developmental group counseling provides the opportunity for each child to engage in an interpersonal process through which he works within a peer group to explain his feelings, attitudes, values, and problems, with the result that he is better able to deal with developmental tasks.

The developmental group provides an opportunity for exploration and examination. It provides a reality situation in which group members have the opportunity to learn appropriate patterns of coping with and mastering certain kinds of tasks in order to develop as effective social beings. The counselor can best understand the child's character through observing his social movement and interaction with peers. The child can benefit from corrective influences and encouragement within the group. The group also gives the children an opportunity to learn by becoming open to new experiences. The silent child can gain as well as those who express themselves verbally. He can learn from listening to and observing others with the same concerns.

Due to the scarcity of research on developmental group counseling in the elementary school, this study was undertaken to determine whether developmental group counseling would improve peer relations in the classroom.

Since children in the elementary school are in the process of development, it is hypothesized that developmental

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group counseling should help improve peer relations in the classroom.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature discloses the fact that as late as a decade ago counseling in groups was conducted primarily in the middle and secondary schools as opposed to children in the primary grades. Glanz, however, recommended this procedure for children of all ages.[1] Ohlsen, however, counsels that effectiveness in such ventures requires the counselor to adjust his techniques to his children's social and emotional maturity.[2] Kranzler reports that there appears to be a difference in opinions concerning the effectiveness of group counseling with the younger child. Approaches used previously by elementary school counselors to improve peer relations have not met with much success.[3] Other writers, however, seem to indicate that group counseling shows real promise in terms of effecting changes in the behavior of elementary school children.[4]

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[1]Edward C. Glanz, Groups in Guidance (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1962), p. 272.

[2]Merle M. Ohlsen, "Counseling Children in Groups," School Counselor, XV (May, 1968), 344.

[3]Gerald D. Kranzler, "Elementary School Counseling," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, II (May, 1968), 286.

[4]Sanford H. Marx, James F. Redding, and Leonard J. Smith, "A Program of Group Counseling in the Elementary School," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, II (October, 1967), 32.

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Nelson, using group play therapy, found improvement in peer relations. Elementary school provides an opportunity for improvement in peer relations through early counseling.[5]

Humphreys and Traxler state that developmental group counseling improves children's attitudes and behavior. They contend that children not only have common problems; they also have common attitudes towards themselves and their problems.[6]

Strang sees developmental group counseling as helping children to learn important social skills, to take a constructive attitude toward others, to play fair, to meet social situations with confidence and courtesy. She suggests that they may learn to handle life problems, not by indulging in outbursts of anger, withdrawing, cultivating self pity, blaming others, or giving way to fear and anxiety, but by facing facts as far as they are able, and analyzing the situation to be met.[7]

Dinkmeyer proposes that within the safety of the socially accepting group, the child can approach problems at his own speed and be accepted as he is. Unlike individual counseling, he is not forced into dialogue. Dinkmeyer also states that the counselor can best understand the child's

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[5]Richard C. Nelson, "Elementary School Counseling with Unstructured Play Media," Personnel and Guidance Journal, V (October, 1966), 85.

[6]Anthony Humphreys and Arthur Traxler, Guidance Services (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1954), p. 188.

[7]Ruth Strang, Group Work in Education (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1958), p. 17.

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character through observing his social movement and interaction with his peers. The child can benefit from corrective influences and encouragement within the group. The process really provides each child an opportunity to consider alternative ways of reacting and to get immediate feedback from his actions while testing reality.[8]

Research findings emphasize that each child brings to the group his past experiences, his attitudes toward problems, and his established methods of working. Especially important is the child's degree of self-esteem and his ability to tolerate ambiguity and to examine issues on the basis of their intrinsic merits.

Kemp contends that developmental group counseling does not have a visualized goal but the task of self-understanding and understanding of others. He sees the process of interaction in such a group as directed toward some of the experiences of its children--past, present, or future. The children use ego-centered responses in their exploration of feelings and attitudes, with a minimal number of problem-centered responses.[9]

Although some research has affirmed that counseling groups in the elementary school can operate with as few as three and as many as eight children, groups composed of five or

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[8]Donald Dinkmeyer, "Developmental Group Counseling," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, IV (May, 1970), 268.

[9]Gratton C. Kemp, Perspectives on the Group Process (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), pp. 334-41.

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six children appear optimal. Group leaders generally recommend a group consisting of a wisely balanced mixture of children. An optimal group arrangement calls for several quiet children and not more than two who are aggressive. Most groups can benefit from the inclusion of one or two children who are well adjusted. One assertion is that normal children probably can contribute to group success and will be harmed only if they have needs similar to those of the children who have developed bad habits. Children considered to be reasonably happy benefit through the group by helping themselves as well as others. The literature indicates that the more adjusted children supply order to the group environment, and that they often provide the behavioral models desperately needed by children lacking social competence.

Groups whose children are of the same sex tend to be more productive and functional. Experts emphasize that during latency children strive for sexual identity. A mixed group might retard this crucial process. It should also be remembered that girls tend to develop sooner than boys, and this could introduce too wide a divergence in topics discussed during the sessions. Hence, when counseling primary school children, unisexual grouping would possess more distinct advantages.

Because a major developmental task of this period is the acquiring of a masculine or feminine identification, structuring groups with children of the same sex seems more fitting. Groups of the same sex provide a greater opportunity for

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exploration of masculine and feminine standards of behavior, as well as making freer verbal interaction possible in the group. Heterogeneity in family, racial, and cultural background among group members is helpful. Individual differences can lead to growth in understanding and tolerance of one another. Heterogeneity in personality types among group members is also desirable.[10]

Lewis found few instances in which counseling literature differentiated between the services appropriate for boys and those most worthwhile for girls. The counseling needs of the two sexes may be quite different. It has long been recognized that the experience of the elementary school may be quite different for male and female children.[11]

Some findings suggest that models (stars) in group counseling serve to strengthen learning about social behavior. Models (stars) who are socially successful appear to be more effective reinforcers than are counselors and other low-sociometric children. When none of the children exhibit successful behavior, it is difficult to learn acceptable behavior from each other. This may be true of other group counseling studies using different criteria in which all children in the

[10]John A. Yunker, "Essential Organizational Components of Group Counseling in the Primary Grades," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, IV (March, 1970), 172-79.

[11]Michael D. Lewis, "The Effects of Counseling and Consultation upon the Sociometric Status and Personal and Social Adjustment of Third Grade Pupils," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, V (October, 1970), 44-52.

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group show a common problem. Thus, group composition may be a major reason why so many group counseling studies report negative results.[12]

Van Hoose, Peters, and Leonard say that the role of the developmental counselor is largely to design for the child a set of experiences which will facilitate the mastery of key developmental tasks. They contend that the elementary counselor will find developmental group counseling a most appropriate means for children in this developmental period because it is in these years that children are making a major push away from dependency on their parents. They are growing increasingly independent and are identifying with their peers, particularly those of the same sex. Another advantage in group counseling is that children are much more likely to be verbal with each other than they are with adults.[13]

Most of the literature on group counseling in the elementary school mentions the sociometric technique. Jennings states that the sociometric test adds considerably to the understanding of the individual child. Combined with other facts, it helps to judge the extent of a child's belonging in the group; to know in what way he is reaching out toward a

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[12]James C. Hansen, Thomas M. Niland, and Leonard P. Zani, "Model Reinforcement in Group Counseling with Elementary School Children," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLVII (April, 1969), 741-44

[13]William Van Hoose, Mildred Peters, and George Leonard, The Elementary School Counselor (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967), pp. 58-60.

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relationship and to make some estimate of his on-going social experience, salutary or otherwise.

The test does not deal with the aspects of social behavior usually discussed, such as co-operation and consideration, aggression and submission. It goes, in fact, directly to the root of the matter, the relationships between children. The sociometric test allows the child to become an agent in his own behalf, to give his personal feeling for others in the form of choices for functioning with them within the group of which he and they are members.[14]

Northway and Lindsay report that the sociometric tests provide considerable information about the social structure of groups, and the social relationships that exist among the children in them. They reveal cliques; they show which children are friends and which are not. If repeated after a time, one can discover how the group structure and the child's personal relationships have changed.[15]

Research indicates that as a child deviates from the group standard, the group members initiate many direct attempts to influence him. By interrelating judgments regarding "who is able to influence the other fellow," and by direct observation of group behavior, investigators have found that: (1) contagion

[14]Helen H. Jennings, Sociometry in Group Relations (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1959), p. 7.

[15]Mary L. Northway and Lindsay Wold, Sociometric Testing (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 61.

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spreads more frequently from high-influence children; (2) children who perceive another child as powerful are most likely to be influenced by the other child, as well as to accept direct attempts at influence; (3) low-power children initiate nondirective influence attempts; and (4) initiate deferential, approval-seeking behavior toward high-power children.[16]

Jennings states that children who are stars show an unusual sensitivity and orientation to the total group situation. They enlarge the social field for the other children and, hence, encourage the development of each individual child. They are, therefore, creative improvers of others' situations as well as their own. In exercising such leadership, they are chosen as the most wanted associates by their peers.

Children who are rejected from choice by other children for them show in the trends of their behavior tendencies to conduct themselves in ways which imply a marked lack of orientation on their part to the elements of the total group situation. Frequently, they not only fail to contribute constructively to the group, but hinder by their behavior the activities undertaken by other children. Especially by their externalizing of private feelings of irritability and the like they subtract from rather than add to the general tone of the social milieu about them.

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[16]Louis M. Smith, "Group Processes in Elementary and Secondary Schools," What Research Says to the Teacher, XIX (December, 1959), 1-25.

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The unchosen and much rejected children should, however, consistently be given their first choices. Generally they are the most insecure children and, hence, the ones most in need of being in psychologically advantageous positions. Placing them with the ones they most wish to be with may help them to feel emotionally comfortable in the group situation and may encourage them to expand socially. The child who is an "isolate" or who is a "reject" in the classroom can be helped to achieve better peer relations by participating in a developmental group counseling program.[17]

Nelson, Murro, Waterland, and Moulin report research using play therapy with elementary school children in which there is little empirical evidence of the value of such a process.[18] Mayer and his colleagues used public commitment and counseling with elementary school children.[19] Neither was found to positively influence school anxiety, teacher-pupil relations, or sociometric status. The effects of counseling

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[17]Helen H. Jennings, Leadership and Isolation (New York: Longman, Gross and Company, 1950), p. 12.

[18]Richard C. Nelson, "Elementary School Counseling with Unstructured Play Media," Personnel and Guidance Journal, V (October, 1966), 85; James J. Murro, "Play Media in Counseling," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, III (December, 1968), 104-10; Jean C. Waterland, "Action Instead of Words," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, IV (March, 1970), 180-87; and Eugene K. Moulin, "The Effects of Client-Centered Group Counseling Using Play Media," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, V (December, 1970), 85.

[19]Roy G. Mayer, et al., "The Use of Public Commitment and Counseling with Elementary School Children," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, V (October, 1970), 22-34.

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and selected remedial techniques with under-achieving elementary school children were compared by Winkler. At the end of the treatment period, there was no significant difference among the groups.[20] Tosi, Swanson, and McLean used group counseling with nonverbalizing elementary school children. Their study examined the effects of the counselor's use of social reinforcement within a group modality. The findings of this study suggest that the experimental treatment contributed to the observed changes made by the children in the experimental group. Due to the limited size of this study, the changes could not be attributed exclusively to the treatment employed in this investigation.[21]

Alper and Kranzler compared the relative efficacy of client-centered versus behavioral approaches in dealing with the behavior problems of elementary school children.[22] No significant differences between treatment groups were found. They concluded that in the absence of a large number of studies with

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[20]R. C. Winkler, et al., "The Effects of Selected Counseling and Remedial Techniques on Under-achieving Elementary School Children," Journal of Counseling Psychology, XII (Winter, 1965), 384-87.

[21]Donald J. Tosi, Carl Swanson, and Pat McLean, "Group Counseling with Nonverbalizing Elementary School Children," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, IV (May, 1970), 260-66.

[22]Theodore G. Alper and Gerald D. Kranzler, "A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Behavioral and Client-Centered Approaches for the Behavior Problems of Elementary School Children," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, V (October, 1970), 35-43.

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adequate controls, it is impossible to come to any firm conclusions regarding the efficacy of behavioral approaches in dealing with the problems of young children.

Developmental counseling and developmental consultation were compared by Lewis in an attempt to measure the difference in effectiveness between the two guidance functions. Neither counseling nor consultation was shown statistically to be effective in improving the sociometric status or the social or personal adjustment of third grade children.[23]

Research utilizing both Negro and white children in a group counseling setting was conducted by Mann in order to determine if behavior could indeed be modified through active intervention. The problem was to determine whether or not extra classroom group counseling had an effect on the Negro and white students in peer relations. The experimental and control groups received pre and post sociograms and a behavior characteristic scale scored by the teacher. The sessions were structured but permissive. Both white and Negro children participated in mixed group (race) sessions. After a period of awkwardness, and in some cases suspicion on the part of both white and Negro children, they began to interact freely. It would appear that early counseling as can be provided in the elementary school may have an effect in terms of preventive as far as

[23]Michael D. Lewis, "The Effects of Counseling and Consultation upon the Sociometric Status and Personal and Social Adjustment of Third Grade Pupils," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, V (October, 1970), 44-52.

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peer relations are concerned.[24]

Hansen, Niland, and Zani investigated the effectiveness of model reinforcement and reinforcement group counseling with elementary school children using sociometric status as a criterion. The findings indicated that low sociometric children in the model reinforcement groups made significantly more gain in social acceptance than either those receiving counseling without models or the control group. These findings suggest that models in group counseling serve to strengthen learning about social behavior.[25]

Biasco attempted to assess the effectiveness of three counseling and guidance treatments: (1) individual counseling; (2) group counseling; and (3) teacher guidance. He randomly assigned children of low sociometric status to four groups. Gain in sociometric status was chosen as the criterion by which to measure the effectiveness of counseling since sociometric status has been shown to be related to many personal, social and educational variables. It was not possible to draw any

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[24]Philip H. Mann, "Modifying the Behavior of Negro Educable Mentally Retarded Boys Through Group Counseling Procedures," Journal of Negro Education, XXXVIII (Spring, 1969), 135-42.

[25]James C. Hansen, Thomas M. Niland, and Leonard P. Zani, "Model Reinforcement in Group Counseling with Elementary School Children," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLVII (April, 1969), 741-44.

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conclusions from the study.[26]

Mayer, Kranzler, and Matthes randomly assigned fifth and sixth graders of low sociometric status, who had given some indication that they wanted to learn how to make friends, to three groups: (1) counseling, in which subjects received both group and individual counseling; (2) teacher consultation, in which the counselor acted as a consultant to the teacher; and (3) control. Gains in sociometric status, along with three other criterion measures were used for evaluation. There were no significant differences among the groups although the mean sociometric gain score for the subjects in the counseling condition was greater than that for the subjects in either control or teacher-guidance conditions.[27]

Kranzler, Mayer, Dyer, and Munger assessed the results of counseling with fourth grade students using sociometric status as the criterion. A sociometric device was administered to seven classrooms. Students of low sociometric status were randomly assigned by classroom to one of three treatment conditions: (1) counseling; (2) teacher guidance; and (3) control. When treatment conditions were compared, the evidence seemed to indicate significant differences in the relative frequency with

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[26]Frank Biasco, "The Effects of Individual Counseling, Multiple Counseling, and Teacher Guidance upon the Sociometric Status of Children Enrolled in Grades Four, Five, and Six," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVII (August, 1966), 323a.

[27]Roy G. Mayer, Gerald D. Kranzler, and William A. Matthes, "Elementary School Counseling and Peer Relations," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLVI (December, 1967), 360-65.

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which subjects increased or decreased in sociometric status, that the differences favored the counseling condition, and that these differences persisted over a period of seven months.[28]

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Certain terms used in this study need to be clarified. Developmental group counseling is a dynamic interpersonal process through which children within the normal range of adjustment work within a peer group with a counselor. Together they explore problems and feelings in an attempt to modify their attitudes so that they are better able to deal with developmental problems. The emphasis in developmental group counseling is upon raising normal children to higher levels of performance through examination of their potentials and presentation of opportunities for development.

A sociometric technique is a method of studying social configurations by ascertaining feelings of attraction, repulsion and indifference among individuals in a group. The sociometric technique is a device for obtaining from the children in a classroom a statement as to which group members would be preferred as cooperating participants in various activities or relationships.

Choice status is the social position of the child in

[28]Gerald D. Kranzler, et al., "Counseling with Elementary School Children: An Experimental Study," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XLIV (June, 1966), 944-49.

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the classroom as measured by the number of chosen and rejected choice expressions focussed upon him by the children of the class.

Star is a term used to designate a child who receives the most choices on the same criterion. The term refers to those children who are outstanding in the number of positive choices received.

A reject is a child who is disliked by others as indicated by sociometric technique. He receives negative choices of others for exclusion from situations in his class requiring collaboration with others. In this study, the reject was decided upon as the child who received the most negative choices.

Isolate is a sociometric term denoting a person chosen by one or no other child of a group on a particular criterion. The term "unchosen" is really more accurate since in most instances the child who receives no choices, nevertheless makes choices of others and consequently is not completely isolated since he is seeking contacts with others.

Role-playing is any kind of action in which a person attempts to portray the character, attitudes, feelings, or actions of another person.

IV. PROCEDURES

The population from which the groups were formed for this study included third, fourth, and fifth grade children

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from Orange Brook Elementary School. Although the school is situated in an upper-middle class neighborhood, it also serves a low-income, culturally deprived neighborhood. The school has approximately 600 children, of which 150 are poor Negroes, 150 poor whites, and the rest upper-middle class. The school has been integrated for six years.

The author of this study is employed as a full time counselor at the school. She conducted all the group sessions and was the only adult involved in the study.

During the first week of October, 1970, a general informal discussion was held in four third grades, four fourth grades, and four fifth grade classrooms and a sociogram was administered. The following rules were observed: each boy and each girl chose or rejected a child of the same sex on two criteria, "being in a group with" and "not wanting to be in a group with."

The sociometric status of the "reject" was determined by adding the number of times he or she was rejected by the boys or girls responding to the instrument in that classroom. Those who were identified as "isolates" were children who were chosen the fewest number of times or not chosen at all.

Two groups were formed from each classroom, one composed of boys and one of girls. Each group contained a reject and his choice, an isolate and his choice, and two stars. There were twenty-four groups. Although it was not planned, there was at least one Negro in every group. Both upper-middle

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and low-income children were represented.

Within a week after the sociogram was given, all groups were in operation. The sessions lasted for forty-five minutes once a week for ten consecutive weeks. The counselor's goals and objectives were: (1) to provide within each child a greater sense of personal worth; (2) to facilitate personal adjustment by developing a sense of belonging through limited social situations; (3) to encourage the child, through self-understanding, to accept responsibility for his own behavior; and (4) to increase the child's respect for human relationships through group interaction.

The first five sessions began with the showing of a short filmstrip from a series entitled "Learning to Live Together."[29] These filmstrips were designed to help eight to twelve year-old boys and girls develop desirable social attitudes and behavior patterns. Free discussion followed the filmstrip showing. Some of the discussions were taped and played back to the children so that they could appraise them. The stress during the evaluation was on the positive, and blunders were treated as steps in learning.

During the next five sessions, role-playing was utilized along with free discussion. Usually a child volunteered to play a role but occasionally the counselor appointed a child to take a certain role. At no time was a child forced to take

[29]Paul R. Kidd, "Learning to Live Together," Family Filmstrips, Distributed by SVE.

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a role that he did not want.

The counselor exerted controls only when violent arguments arose or when ganging up on one child occurred. The chief characteristics of the discussions were the outgoing behavior, frank self-revelations, and strong feeling-expressions. The most frequently stated problems were: personal-social relationships, pupil-teacher relationships, peer rivalry, and ethical concepts.

The sessions continued for ten weeks, after which a second sociogram was administered to the same classrooms. Data obtained from the two sociograms were compared to measure the effects that developmental group counseling had on peer relations and to test the hypothesis that developmental group counseling should improve peer relations in the classroom.

V. RESULTS

Table 1 indicates the change in sociometric status by showing the number of negative choices received by rejects prior to and following the group sessions. Inspection of the table reveals that prior to group sessions, third grade boys and girls received more rejections than the fourth or fifth grade rejects. After group sessions, the third grade boys had a 68 per cent decrease in rejections. Similar gains can be seen for the girls, who had a 77 per cent decrease in rejections. Data in the table show third graders with the highest

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per cent of decrease. It also reveals that girls at all grade levels decreased in rejections more than the boys.

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF REJECTIONS FOR REJECTS PRIOR TO AND AFTER GROUP SESSIONS

Grade	Sex	Number of Rejections		Per Cent Decrease
		Prior to	After	
Third	Male	34	11	68
	Female	31	7	77
	Total	65	18	72
Fourth	Male	29	12	58
	Female	30	11	63
	Total	59	23	61
Fifth	Male	30	16	47
	Female	29	12	59
	Total	59	28	52

The change in the sociometric status of the isolates following the group sessions is shown in Table 2. Inspection of the table reveals that prior to the group sessions, the number of choices received by isolates of either sex at any grade level varied only slightly. Following the group sessions the sociometric status of both boys and girls in the third grade showed the greatest increase. The fourth grade girls gained only slightly over the boys. The fifth grade boys showed no

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gain in sociometric status while the girls had a gain of 50 per cent. The girls at all grade levels profited more than the boys.

TABLE 2

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHOICES FOR ISOLATES PRIOR TO AND AFTER GROUP SESSIONS

Grade	Sex	Number of Choices		Per Cent Increase
		Prior to	After	
Third	Male	3	11	73
	Female	4	15	73
	Total	7	26	73
Fourth	Male	2	6	67
	Female	4	13	69
	Total	6	19	68
Fifth	Male	2	2	0
	Female	3	6	50
	Total	5	8	38

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The third grade boys and girls showed the greatest improvement in sociometric status. This may be due to the fact that the counselor had previously taught kindergarten and first grade students and that her many years of experience with these young children may have had an effect on her relations with the

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third grade students.

Another factor that should be considered as a possible contribution to the findings in favor of the counseled group of girls is social desirability. It was possible that the girls in counseling, because of their relationship with a female counselor, wanted to please her. It would be interesting to speculate what the possible effects of a male counselor might be on the boys.

This study should be considered exploratory in nature. More intensive and systematic investigations are needed to determine whether developmental group counseling is as effective as it appears to be. The findings of this study should be interpreted with caution because of several limitations. The study was limited to one school, one guidance counselor, 144 children in twenty-four groups, and ten counseling sessions per group. The investigation was also limited to one instrument to measure peer relations.

That peer relations did improve may be due to many causes. How lasting the results will be is hard to tell. Possibly, a third sociogram at the end of the school year would tell us whether developmental group counseling had any lasting effects on the children.

Similar studies should be conducted, but a number of changes should be made in the design of such studies. It seems advisable that counseling should be carried on with counselors of both sexes and for varying periods of time. In addition,

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different instruments might be used for evaluation. Because of the limited scope of this study, it is not possible to attribute any change exclusively to the treatment employed in this study. It is also possible that the differences among groups were merely the result of chance.

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